

# 106122 - Luke AFB Departure Corridor Land Acq.

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## Luke Air Force Base Departure Corridor Project

### Air Force Announces First Munitions Storage Area Land Acquisition

#### Executive Summary:

The Army Corps of Engineers will serve as the principle real estate agent for a \$27.3 million easement acquisition project at Luke Air Force Base. The Air Education and Training Command (AETC) plans to acquire more than 2,100 acres of easements around Luke Air Force Base.

The acquisition includes \$21.3 million targeted for easement rights for more than 1,700 acres, primarily in the southern departure corridor. The property located in the approach zones on the ends of runways would be acquired to prevent encroaching development from impacting flight operations. This is critical for the support of training of F-16 fighter pilots and maintaining the safety of the men and women of Luke Air Force Base and the local community.

AETC will use the remaining \$6 million dollars to acquire land and install security improvements on 273 acres near the base munitions storage area located south of the base. Three million is targeted for land purchases; the remaining three million will fund security improvements. Acquisition of this land will physically connect the munitions storage area to the base proper and create a security buffer zone around the facility.

#### General Info:

Luke Air Force Base is one of five Army installations and Air Force bases supported by the Arizona Nevada Area Office staff of the Los Angeles District (SPL) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Others include Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Fort-Huachuca, Yuma Proving Ground and Nellis Air Force Base.

#### History:

After the outbreak of the Korean War the Los Angeles District engaged in one of its largest construction programs. We began working on Luke Air Force Base for the Air Force. Reactivation of the Luke Field as a fighter base in February 1951 reestablished what had been the biggest Air Force training base for fighter pilots since World War II. The district was quick to execute this project. Construction began in March 24, 1941 and by June 1 of the same year the first airplane landed.

Unfortunately, floods hit Luke AFB in the Agua Fria area periodically. In 1951 the base was completely inundated; silt, sand and gravel were deposited over the entire base and about 200 buildings were flooded. Moreover, the town of Goodyear, the Litchfield Park Naval Air Facility, and valuable agricultural lands were also flooded. The urgency of the problem was known, but financial constraints prevented a solution. Finally, in 1953 Congress permitted the Secretary of the Air Force to authorize a flood control project, Trilby Wash detention basin and outlet channel. In 1966 SPL completed the project, which protected not only the Air Force Base, but also the Litchfield Park Naval Air Facility, the Goodyear Aircraft Company plant, the towns of Goodyear, Litchfield Park, and Avondale and about 50,000 cultivated acres of agricultural lands.

Extracted from "A History of the Los Angeles District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1898-1965", Dr. Anthony F. Turhollow

#### Frequently Asked Questions:

Is the Air Force acquiring land in the Luke Departure Corridors?

The Army Corps of Engineers will negotiate with landowners to acquire real estate interests in selected portions of the Luke Departure Corridor.

What is involved in negotiating a real estate transaction with the U.S. Government?

There are several basic steps involved in a typical real estate acquisition by the U.S. Government.

- The government must identify a need for a specific real estate interest

- An appraisal must be conducted to determine market value
- Depending on the type of real estate transaction, certain environmental actions such as an Environmental Baseline Study, Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement may be required.
- The government must make an offer in writing to the landowner or authorized agent.
- The landowner, in writing, can either accept the government offer or make a counter offer.
- Once the landowner and the U.S. government complete negotiations, the terms are made in writing and the U.S. government formally accepts the negotiated agreement.
- The parties close escrow, including any requirements to clear title defects and liens, and transfer title.

How is a landowner insured a fair price for their property?

The U.S. Government is required to obtain timely market appraisals for all real estate acquisitions.

Appraisals are obtained from independent local contract appraisers who are state certified. Appraisals are reviewed by qualified review appraisers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

When will acquisition be completed?

The Air Force anticipates having all offers accepted by June 2006

What if a landowner disagrees with the Government's appraised value?

Landowners may conduct their own appraisals.

Which appraisal will be used &ndash; the landowners or the governments?

The government must make the initial offer based on its own appraisal. However, a landowner's appraisal may be considered as part of a counter offer.

As a landowner can I see the appraisal?

Landowners will be provided a summary of the findings in the appraisal. The appraisal itself is a deliberative document and not releasable.

Do you anticipate acquiring any land outside the flight corridors?

No, Air Force policy is that we acquire the minimal real estate easements needed to sustain military operations and force protection of critical assets.

What do you mean when you refer to the purchase of easements?

By acquiring temporary easements, landowners are compensated and they are allowed to continue using their property in a manner conducive to base operations.

How will I know if the Air Force is interested in acquiring real estate interests in my land?

Representatives from the Corps of Engineers will provide points of contact.

Maps/Photos:

(Click image to enlarge)

Newsrelease and Slides:

NR04-08 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Sponsors Intergovernmental Agency meeting Luke Air Force Base Departure Corridor Project

News Articles

Luke buying land to act as a buffer - Charles Kelly, The Arizona Republic - July 8, 2004

Council approves land swap resolution to help Luke AFB - Peoria Times - May 12, 2004

Luke's promised land? - The Arizona Republic - May 3, 2004

Deal May Save Luke - David Madrid, The Arizona Republic - May 1, 2004

Land swaps may resolve Luke issue, The Arizona Republic - May 1, 2004

Current Corps Projects on Base

Luke AFB - MSCA Land Acquisition

Luke AFB - 120 Room Dormitory

Luke AFB - ADAL Sq Ops Bldg 97

Luke AFB - Child Development Center - Completed

